Venice

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The city was one of the largest in Europe in the High Middle Ages, with a population of 60,000 in AD 1000; 80,000 in 1200; and rising up to 110,000–180,000 in 1300. In the mid 1500s the city's population was 170,000, and by 1600 almost 200,000

In 2009, there were 270,098 people residing in Venice's comune (the population estimate of 272,000 inhabitants includes the population of the whole Comune of Venezia;

Although no surviving historical records deal directly with the founding of Venice, tradition and the available evidence have led several historians to agree that the original population of Venice consisted of refugees from Roman cities near Venice such as Padua, Aquileia, Treviso, Altino, and Concordia (modern Portogruaro) and from the undefended countryside, who were fleeing successive waves of Germanic and Hun invasions. This is further supported by the documentation on the so-called 'apostolic families', the twelve founding families of Venice who elected the first doge, who in most cases trace their lineage back to Roman families Some late Roman sources also reveal the existence of fishermen on the islands in the original marshy lagoons. They were referred to as incolae lacunae ("lagoon dwellers"). The traditional founding is identified with the dedication of the first church, that of San Giacomo on the islet of Rialto (Rivoalto, "High Shore")—said to have taken place at the stroke of noon on 25 March 421 (the Feast of the Annunciation).

Venice's long decline started in the 15th century, when it first made an unsuccessful attempt to hold Thessalonica against the Ottomans (1423–1430). It also sent ships to help defend Constantinople against the besieging Turks (1453). After Constantinople fell to Sultan Mehmet II, he declared the first of a series of Ottoman-Venetian wars that cost Venice much of its eastern Mediterranean possessions. Next, Christopher Columbus discovered the New World in 1492. Then Vasco da Gama of Portugal found a sea route to India by rounding the Cape of Good Hope during his first voyage of 1497–99, destroying Venice's land route monopoly. France, England and the Dutch Republic followed. Venice's oared galleys were at a disadvantage when it came to traversing the great oceans, and therefore Venice was left behind in the race for colonies.

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The Black Death devastated Venice in 1348 and once again between 1575 and 1577. In three years, the plague killed some 50,000 people. In 1630, the Italian plague of 1629–31 killed a third of Venice's 150,000 citizens. Venice began to lose its position as a center of international trade during the later part of the Renaissance as Portugal became Europe's principal intermediary in the trade with the East, striking at the very foundation of Venice's great wealth; while France and Spain fought for hegemony over Italy in the Italian Wars, marginalising its political influence. However, the Venetian empire was a major exporter of agricultural products, and until the mid-18th century, a significant manufacturing center.

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The city is often threatened by flood tides pushing in from the Adriatic between autumn and early spring. Six hundred years ago, Venetians protected themselves from land-based attacks by diverting all the major rivers flowing into the lagoon and thus preventing sediment from filling the area around the city. This created an ever-deeper lagoon environment.

In 1604, to defray the cost of flood relief, Venice introduced what could be considered the first example of a 'stamp tax'.[citation needed] When the revenue fell short of expectations in 1608, Venice introduced paper with the superscription 'AQ' and imprinted instructions, which was to be used for 'letters to officials'. At first, this was to be a temporary tax, but it remained in effect until the fall of the Republic in 1797. Shortly after the introduction of the tax, Spain produced similar paper for general taxation purposes, and the practice spread to other countries.

PONTE
MARIA CALLAS

Venice became Austrian territory when Napoleon signed the Treaty of Campo Formio on 12 October 1797. The Austrians took control of the city on 18 January 1798. But Venice was taken from Austria by the Treaty of Pressburg in 1805 and became part of Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy; however it was returned to Austria following Napoleon's defeat in 1814, when it became part of the Austrian-held Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia. In 1848 and 1849, a revolt briefly re-established the Venetian Republic under Daniele Manin. In 1866, after the Third Italian War of Independence, Venice, along with the rest of the Veneto, became part of the newly created Kingdom of Italy.

During the Second World War, the historic city was largely free from attack, the only aggressive effort of note being Operation Bowler, a successful Royal Air Force precision strike on the German naval operations in the city in March 1945. The targets were destroyed with virtually no architectural damage inflicted on the city itself.[38] However the industrial areas in Mestre and Marghera and the railway lines to Padua, Trieste and Trento were repeatedly bombed. On 29 April 1945, a force of British and New Zealand troops under Lieutenant General Freyberg of the British Eighth Army liberated Venice, which had been a hotbed of anti-Mussolini Italian partisan activity

Santa Maria della Salute (English: Saint Mary of Health), commonly known simply as the Salute, is a Roman Catholic church and minor basilica located at Punta della Dogana in the Dorsoduro sestiere of the city of Venice, Italy.

It stands on the narrow finger of Punta della Dogana, between the Grand Canal and the Giudecca Canal, at the Bacino di San Marco, making the church visible when entering the Piazza San Marco from the water. The Salute is part of the parish of the Gesuati and is the most recent of the so-called plague churches.

In 1630, Venice experienced an unusually devastating outbreak of the plague. As a votive offering for the city's deliverance from the pestilence, the Republic of Venice vowed to build and dedicate a church to Our Lady of Health (or of Deliverance, Italian: Salute). The church was designed in the then fashionable baroque style by Baldassare Longhena, who studied under the architect Vincenzo Scamozzi. Construction began in 1631. Most of the objects of art housed in the church bear references to the Black Death.

Depero

The Rialto Bridge (Italian: Ponte di Rialto; Venetian: Ponte de Rialto) is the oldest of the four bridges spanning the Grand Canal in Venice, Italy. Connecting the sestieri (districts) of San Marco and San Polo, it has been rebuilt several times since its first construction as a pontoon bridge in the 12th century, and is now a significant tourist attraction in the city.

The development and importance of the Rialto market on the eastern bank increased traffic on the floating bridge, so it was replaced in 1255 by a wooden bridge. This structure had two inclined ramps meeting at a movable central section, that could be raised to allow the passage of tall ships. The connection with the market eventually led to a change of name for the bridge. During the first half of the 15th century, two rows of shops were built along the sides of the bridge. The rents brought an income to the State Treasury, which helped maintain the bridge.

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The Venetian Arsenal (Italian: Arsenale di Venezia) is a complex of former shipyards and armories clustered together in the city of Venice in northern Italy. Owned by the state, the Arsenal was responsible for the bulk of the Venetian republic's naval power during the middle part of the second millennium AD. It was "one of the earliest large-scale industrial enterprises in history

Construction of the Arsenal began around 1104, during Venice's republican era. It became the largest industrial complex in Europe before the Industrial Revolution, spanning an area of about 45 hectares (110 acres), or about fifteen percent of Venice. Surrounded by a 2-mile (3.2 km) rampart, laborers and shipbuilders regularly worked within the Arsenal, building ships that sailed from the city's port. With high walls shielding the Arsenal from public view and guards protecting its perimeter, different areas of the Arsenal each produced a particular prefabricated ship part or other maritime implement, such as munitions, rope, and rigging. These parts could then be assembled into a ship in as little as one day